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ABSTRACT

5 An apparatus and method for discharging sheets from a starwheel
assembly and creating stacks of a desired number of sheets without interrupting
the rotation of the starwheel assembly. The present invention separates sheets
such that one separated sheet completes a stack and the other separated sheet is
supported by a separator to begin a new stack. The completed stack is preferably
transported away from the starwheel assembly by a conveyor as the new stack
supports additional sheets that are discharged from the starwheel assembly. The
10 new stack will preferably move away from the starwheel assembly to provide
clearance for the accumulation of additionally discharged sheets. The apparatus
can allow for cyclical repetition of the separation of sheets, the stacking of sheets,
and the transportation of stacks such that continual rotation of the starwheel
assembly is not interrupted.

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